

VZCZCXRO7090
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #2139 1731008
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 221008Z JUN 06
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5243
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 002139

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/21/2016

TAGS: [IZ](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: MALIKI MAY LAUNCH RECONCILIATION PROPOSAL SOON,
BUT WAY AHEAD UNCLEAR

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, A.I., DANIEL SPECKHARD FOR REASONS 1.
4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The next window for PM Maliki to announce his national reconciliation proposal is Sunday, June 25, before the Council of Representatives (CoR). Maliki reportedly has the support of President Talabani; however, Sunni Vice President Tariq Al-Hashimi has proposed a number of likely unacceptable revisions to the draft. At least some Dawa and Kurd political figures do not yet seem on board with Rubaie's approach. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) For over a week, NSA Rubaie has been predicting the impending announcement by PM of a National Reconciliation proposal that Rubaie has been working on (text provided septel). On June 21, Rubaie told PolCouns and Pol-MilCouns that the proposal would be discussed that afternoon by the "three presidencies" (i.e., President and Vice Presidents, Speaker and Deputy Speakers, Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers). Talabani and Mashadani reportedly were supportive of the proposal, but Sunni VP Hashemi submitted a number of changes that -- according to Rubaie -- were not worthy of a national leader and reflected only Tariq's Sunni constituency. Rubaie said that he believed the Prime Minister would announce the proposal at the next CoR session, on June 25. When asked how differences would be resolved and detailed programs developed, Rubaie responded candidly that these were good questions, but they had not thought that far ahead yet.

¶3. (C) In conversations with mostly Shia Dawa and SCIRI political figures over the past week, most had no familiarity with the draft proposal. One who had, Dawa stalwart Dr. Haider Al-Abadi, said that the proposal was entirely premature. Al-Abadi stated that no one yet would even agree on talking to insurgents or those who claimed to represent them, and he questioned the notion of removing all red lines (point 16 in the draft proposal) that prevent Iraqis from political participation. Dr. Sami Al-Askari likewise did not think people were ready to think about forgiveness. Kurd parliamentary leader Fuad Makhsum was aware of the proposal but did not seem enthused about it.

¶4. (C) Hashemi's proposed changes (text provided septel) do, in fact, reflect a strong Sunni perspective and include elements contrary to U.S. interests. His approach appears to equate terrorism, Saddamists, occupation, militias, armed political militias, and death squads; he says the "government should adopt a clear and honest position with regard to" these issues. Hashemi also calls for "acknowledging the legitimacy of the national resistance and its distinction from terrorism, encouraging it to join the political process, and the necessity of including it in the national reconciliation dialogue." Rubaie pointed acerbically to Hashemi's use of "national" resistance, vice the presumably softer term "honorable" resistance.

¶5. (SBU) Late on June 21, Talabani announced his support of

the proposal that the PM would announce. However, other press reports indicated that Dawa leader Ibrahim Jafari and SCIRI leader Shaykh Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim were not ready to endorse the PM's approach.

16. (C) In a separate meeting with the PM on June 22 (septel), Charge asked about the status of the Reconciliation proposal.

The PM said he would be shortly sharing with the Embassy a revision of the proposal based on his meetings with the "three presidencies" the previous evening. He assured the Charge that the proposed amendments regarding the legitimacy of the amendments were completely unacceptable. He indicated that his intention remained to announce the plan to the CoR on Sunday, June 25.

17. (C) COMMENT: Stay tuned. Regardless of whether Maliki announces his launch of a national reconciliation process in the next few days, gaining broad agreement on its shape and execution will take time and negotiation both within his coalition and across the sectarian divides. END COMMENT.
SPECKHARD